

---

# 3

## SYSTEM FUNCTIONS

ESTABLISHING THE COMMUNICATION CONNECTION .....	2
Dial-in Instructions .....	2
Accessing the MDS System .....	4
SUBMITTING MDS DATA FILES .....	8
INITIAL FEEDBACK REPORT AND	
FINAL VALIDATION REPORT .....	12
Initial Feedback Report .....	12
Final Validation Report .....	14

---

For LTC facility users, there are three basic functions of the MDS system. They are:

- Establishing the communication connection
- Submitting electronic MDS files
- Receiving and interpreting validation reports

The following sections provide instructions and procedures for each of these functions.

---

## ESTABLISHING THE COMMUNICATION CONNECTION

The communications part of the MDS System supports the transfer of MDS data between LTC facilities and their respective State agencies. In order to connect to the State agency, you must first ensure that the software and hardware are correctly installed. Installation instructions should have been provided by the AT&T Network. All your equipment, to include the modem, should be turned on before you access browser.

---

### Dial-in Instructions

Once your AT&T software is installed and configured, you will be able to connect to the Medicare Data Communication Network (MDCN) for your file transfer needs.

#### For Windows 95/98/2000 and Windows NT Users

1. Open the shortcut titled AT&T Dialer Shortcut. The AT&T Global Network-Login screen will appear. (Figure 3-1)



Figure 3-1. Dialer Window

2. Type in the password (same as your User ID) assigned to you by AT&T Global and click **Connect** at the bottom of the screen. DO NOT click the save password box as this is a security violation. Your modem will dial and connect to MDCN.

⇒ If you have problems with the MDCN connection, contact your MDCN Help Desk at (800) 905-2069.

The first time you connect to MDCN through AT&T Global Services and periodically in the future, your password will expire. Type your new password and confirm it in the appropriate boxes.

#### Password rules

- \* A password must begin with an alphabetic character.
- \* Passwords can contain alpha or numeric characters (no special characters).
- \* You may not reuse a password for six months.
- \* Passwords are a minimum of 5 characters and a maximum of 8 characters.

⇒ Periodically the AT&T will make updates to your software by downloading updated files at the time of connection. When this occurs, do not be alarmed. Allow the download to be completed, click **OK**, then go to the next step.

3. The AT&T Global Network Dialer - [Network View] screen will open. It will take a few moments for this screen to appear. This screen will depict a connection between your computer, the AT&T Global Network and a private intranet. This private intranet is the CMS access point for your data submission.  
(Figure 3-2)

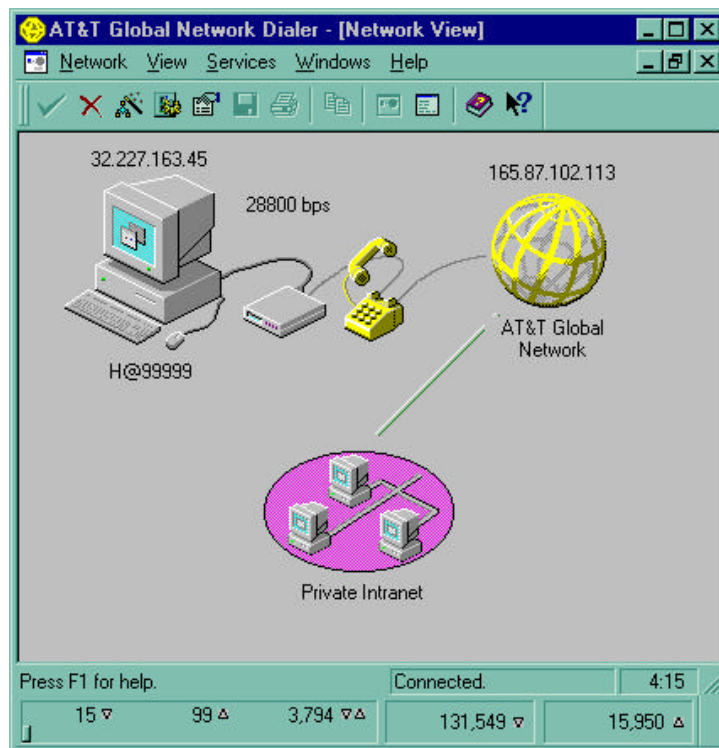


Figure 3-2. Network View

---

## Accessing the MDS System

You are now ready to begin using the Medicare Data Communication Network. Open your browser and select MDS. This will connect you to your state's Welcome page (Figure 3-3).

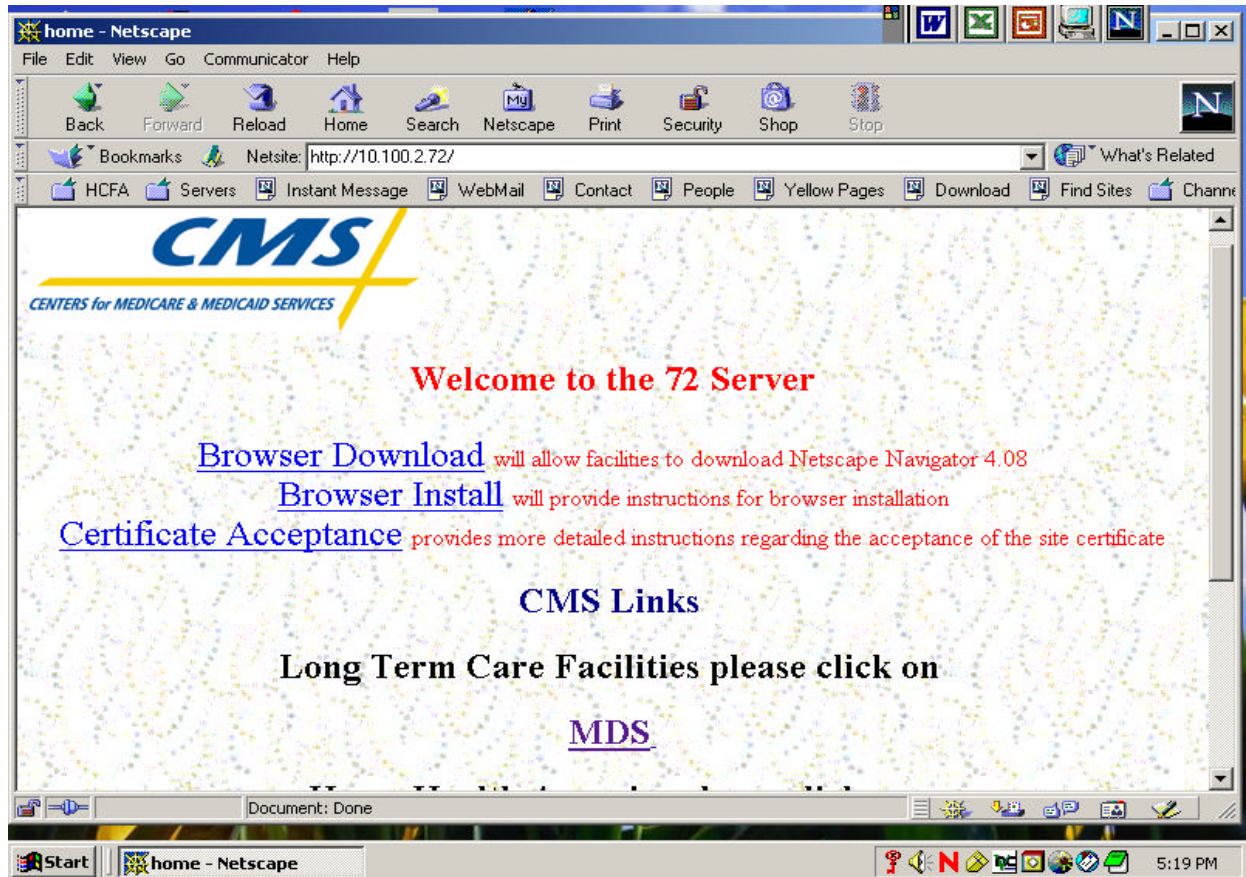


Figure 3-3. CMS Links Page



⇒ The MDCN Administrator should have provided you with the appropriate URL for the MDS System. If this has not been provided, contact the MDCN Administrator.

Once you press **Enter**, the browser will look for the specified URL. There are configuration options within the browser that can make accessing the MDS System easier; in other words, you can configure it so you do not have to type in the URL each time you access the browser.

When the browser finds the specified URL, the CMS MDS Welcome Page will appear (Figure 3-4).

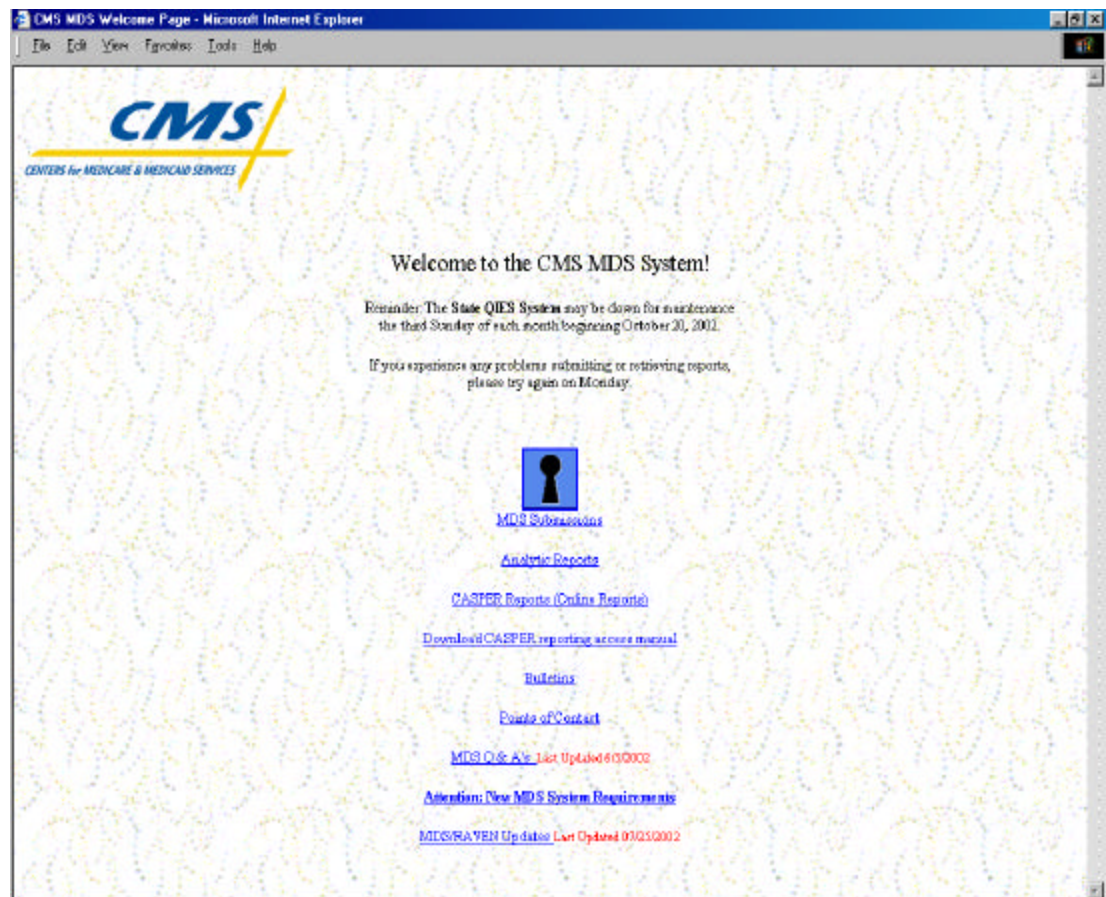


Figure 3-4. CMS MDS Welcome Page

There are six options available to you from this page. They include:

- [MDS Submissions](#) - accesses the main MDS System menu.
- [Analytic Reports](#) - accesses the Quality Indicator Re-orting software.
- [CASPER Reports \(On-line Reports\)](#) - access to the CASPER reporting system for on line facility reports.

- Bulletins - contains news from the State agency.
- Points of Contact - provides a list of contacts (names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses, as applicable).
- MDS/RAVEN Updates - provides information and downloadable files to update RAVEN software.

Choose the desired link by pointing and clicking on the desired text.

⇒ *Be sure to check the Bulletins link and MDS/RAVEN links frequently for new information that may have been posted.*

MDS Submissions allows access to the MDS System functions. Analytic Reports provides a direct link to the Quality Indicator software where QI reports may be requested and viewed. The Bulletins option contains information posted by your State Coordinator. This option may contain little or no information. CASPER Reports provides a direct link to request and view facility reports. Points of Contact should, at a minimum, identify the state agency system administrator to whom you will direct any questions pertaining to the MDS System. MDS/RAVEN Updates contain information to assist you in keeping the MDS Automation System up-to-date and provides links to allow you to download updates to RAVEN software. When you select MDS Submissions or Online Reports, a User name and Password window will appear (Figure 3-5).

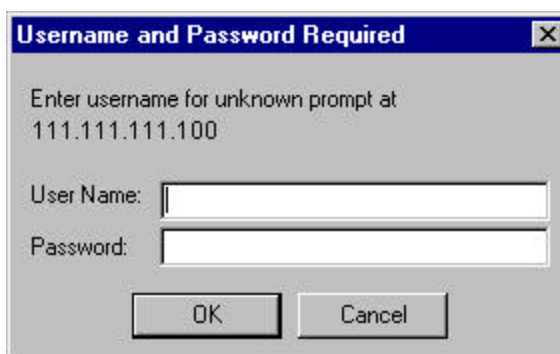


Figure 3-5. User name and Password Window

⇒ *You should have been provided with your user name and password for the MDS System. If this has not been provided, contact the State Agency System Administrator or other designated point of contact. Your user name and password will be the same for both the MDS Submissions and CASPER reporting system.*

You must point and click in the first field, *User Name*, to begin entering the required information.

You may use the **Tab** key or point and click in the second field, *Password*, to type in your password.

Once you have entered both a valid user name and password, press **Enter** or point and click on **OK**. You may select **Cancel** if you do not wish to submit MDS data. The User name and Password Required window will appear only when you initially access the MDS submission process.

Once you select MDS Submissions, enter a correct user name and password and select **OK**, the CMS MDS Main Menu will appear (Figure 3-6). This window includes:

- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) - provides a means of helping you with any common issues or problems that may arise. The State Agency System Administrator may include these issues and solutions to problems regarding the MDS System. If the State Agency System Administrator has not posted anything, nothing will be displayed when selecting this link.
- Process MDS Data - accesses the window for MDS data submissions.

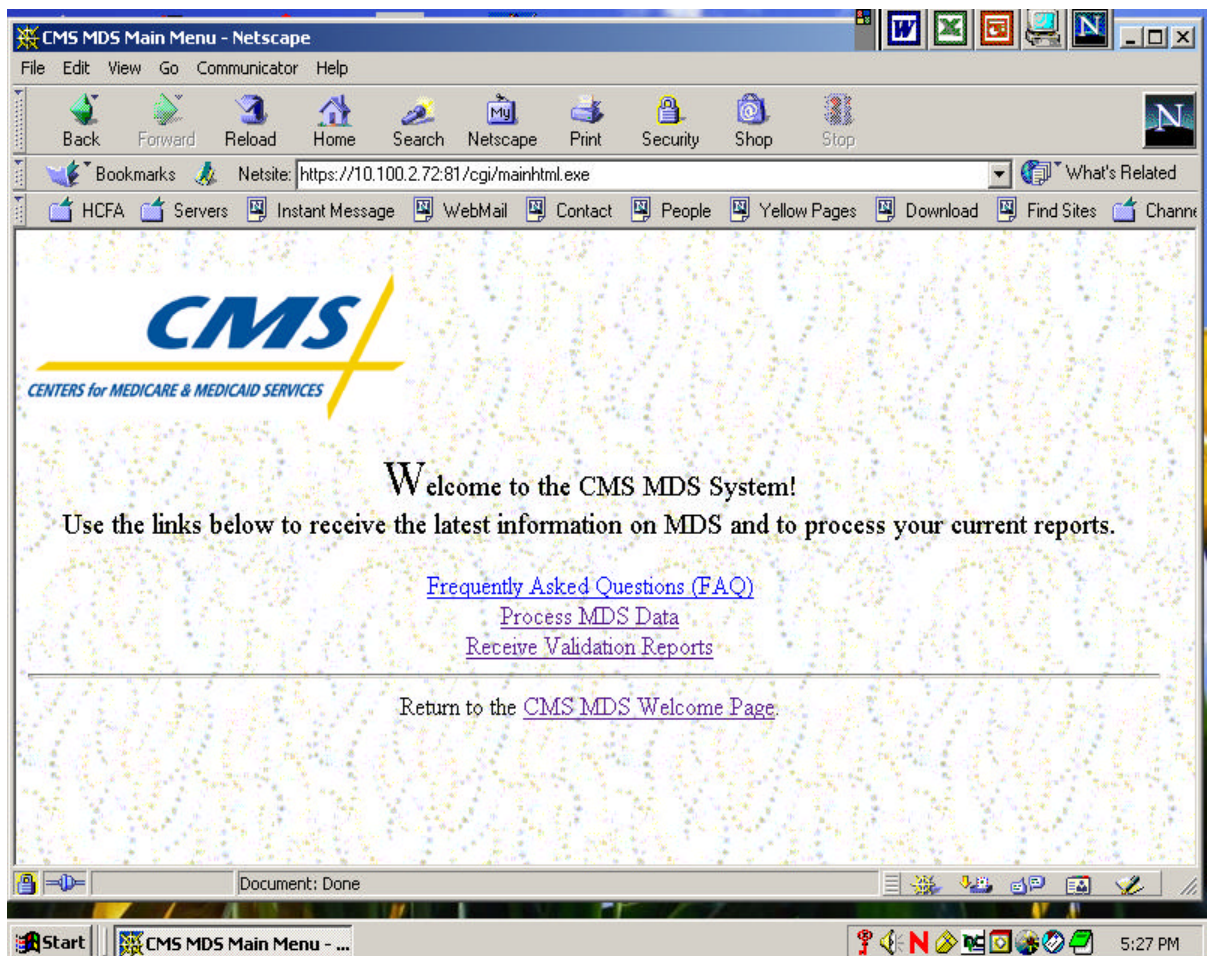


Figure 3-6. CMS MDS Main Menu

- Receive Validation Reports - accesses the window from which you can select the date/time stamped Initial Feedback, Final Validation Reports, and Scheduled Facility Reports to view or download (save to a file).



As with the Bulletins option on the previous screen, the FAQ option may initially contain little information until the system has been in use for a period of time. If you would like to return to the Welcome Page, simply point and click on the underlined text, CMS MDS Welcome Page.

## SUBMITTING MDS DATA FILES

⇒ *You must be using software capable of encoding MDS records and exporting data files in accordance with CMS's standard record layout specifications for version 2.0 of the MDS.*

To submit your MDS data, point and click on Process MDS Data on the CMS MDS Main Menu. The MDS File Submission window includes instructions and information about submitting MDS files and a data entry field for the name of the MDS file (Figure 3-7).

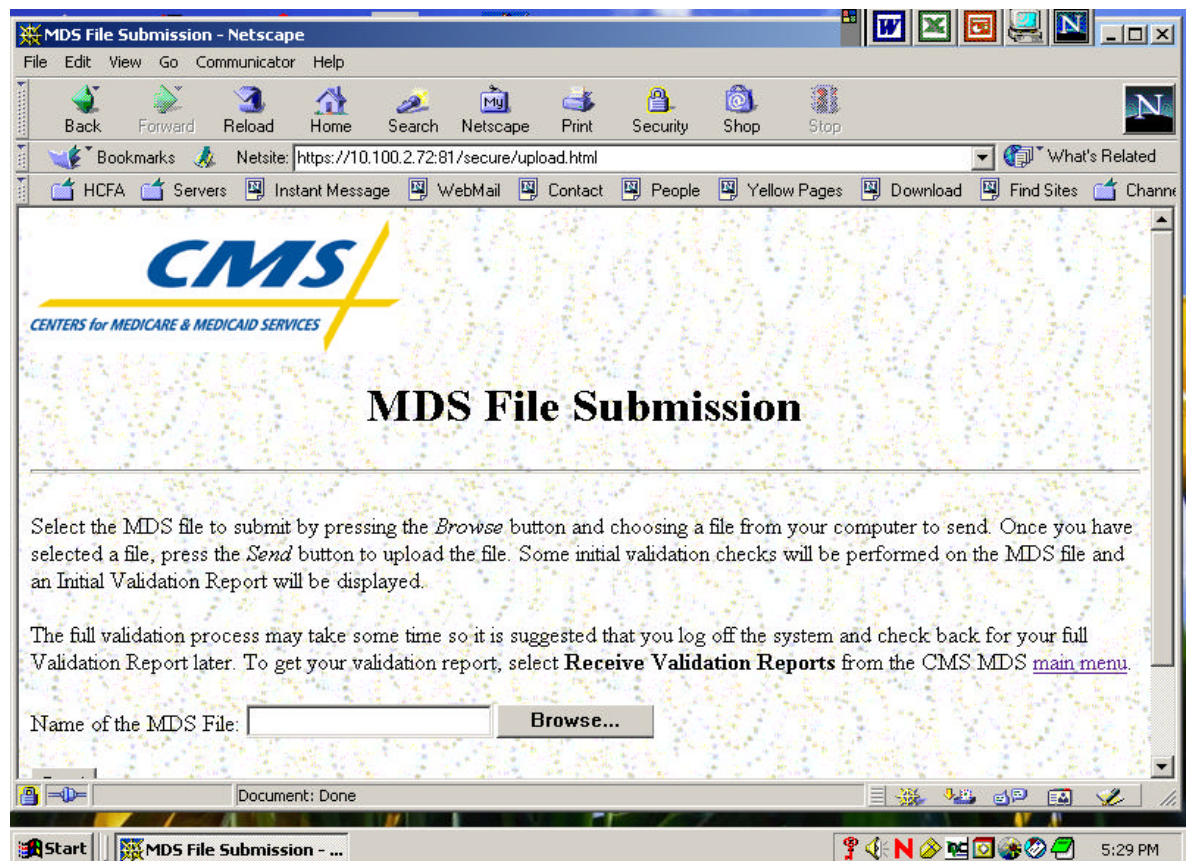


Figure 3-7. MDS File Submission Window

You have two options for entering a file name. If you know the file name, you may point and click on the *Name of the MDS File* field and simply type in the file name including the complete path to the file (e.g., *C:\mds\myfile.xxx*). The recommended method is to browse or review lists of files by pointing and clicking on the **Browse** button.



---

A File Source window will appear to enable you to select from a list of files on the computer hard drive or from a floppy disk inserted into a different drive (Figure 3-8).



Figure 3-8. File Source Window

⇒ A security information window will appear which serves to inform you that credit card numbers, etc. may not be safe to transmit. You may click on the box next to Show This Alert Next Time if you do not wish to view this security information window each time you submit a file.

Select **All Files** from the drop-down list in the Files of Type field so that you do not limit the types of files shown in the list. Ensure that the correct drive is selected in the *Look In:* field (C: for the computer hard drive and A: or B: for a floppy disk drive). The list of file names will appear in the area above the *File Name* field. To select a file for submission, you may point and click on a file name and then on **Open** or point and double click on the name of the file you wish to send.

The file name will appear in the *Name of the MDS File* field on the MDS File Submission window. Once you have selected a file, point and click on the **Send** button to submit the file. If you decide not to submit a file, you may point and click on the words main menu at the bottom of the MDS File Submission screen to return to the CMS MDS Main Menu. Once you select **Send**, a Send Confirmation window will appear (Figure 3-9).

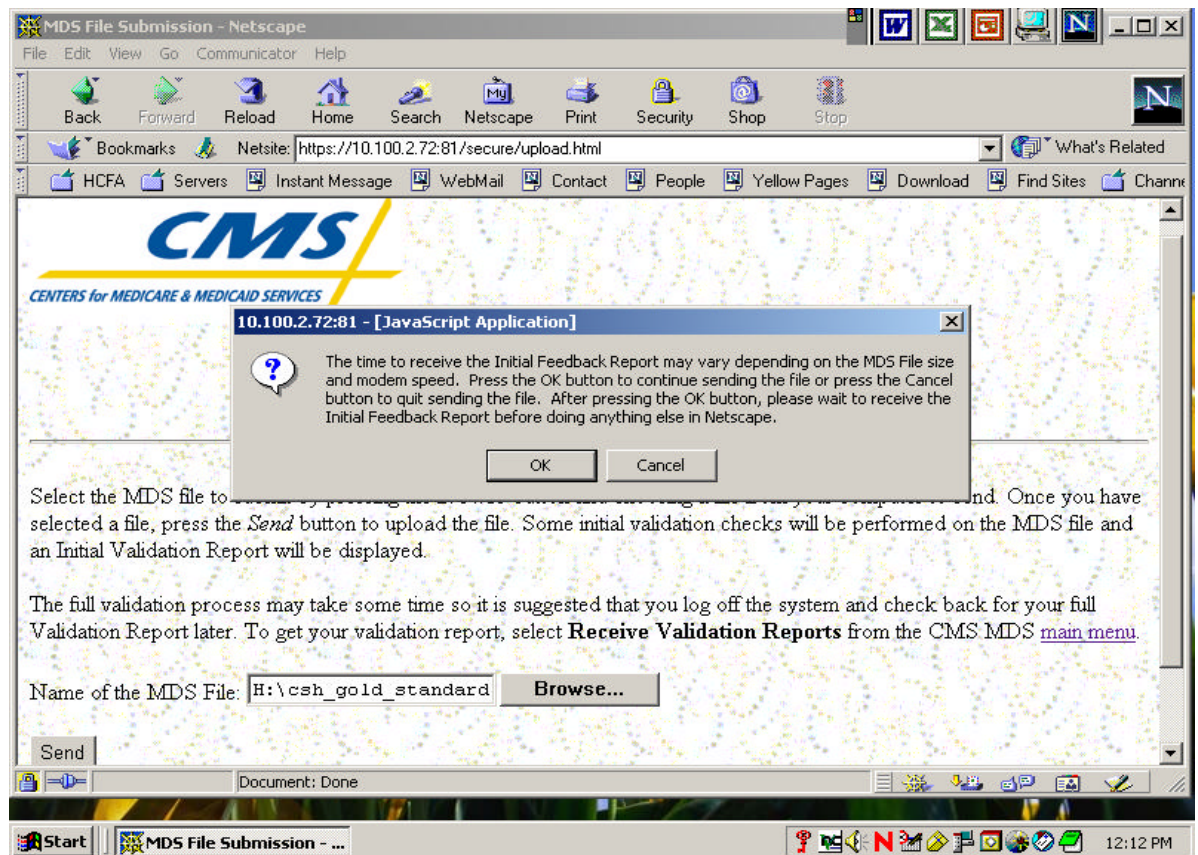


Figure 3-9. Send Confirmation Window

⇒ You risk losing your connection or interrupting the file submission process if you do not wait for the Initial Feedback Report.

The Confirmation window serves as a reminder that the time required to generate the Initial Feedback Report will vary and that you should wait for the Initial Feedback Report (which will indicate whether the submission was accepted or rejected) prior to continuing with any other MDS or browser functions. If, for some reason, you do not wish to wait for the Initial Feedback, you may choose **Cancel** to discontinue the submission process. To confirm that you want to continue the process, select **OK**.

Sometimes, when attempting to submit a file, there is a problem at the State. A file transmission error will display (Figure 3-10). If this occurs, contact your state coordinator.

⇒ The Initial Feedback Report will only display errors found on the header and trailer records. It will not include errors that may be found on the data records. Those errors will be displayed on the Final Validation Report.

Once you have confirmed the send command, you should remain at the MDS File Submission window and not execute any additional MDS or Netscape functions until you receive an Initial Feedback Report.

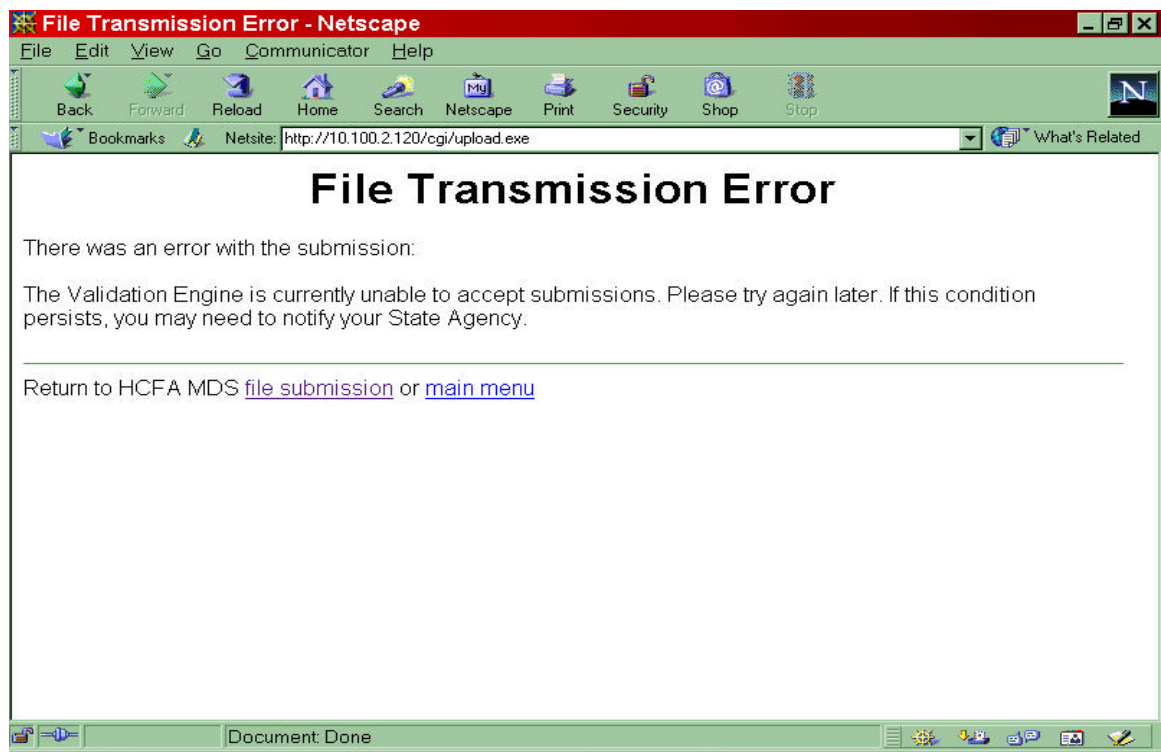


Figure 3-10. File Transmission Error

The Initial Feedback Report indicates that the MDS System has performed a basic validation check on your file and whether your submission has been accepted or rejected. If rejected, the Initial Feedback Report includes the rejection error.

The next section provides more detailed information about the validation process and reports.



---

## INITIAL FEEDBACK REPORT AND FINAL VALIDATION REPORT

⇒ *You will not receive a Final Validation report if your Initial Feedback report indicates that your batch has been rejected.*

Once data is received at the State agency, the MDS System will validate the file structure and data content. These validations are based on the MDS 2.0 record specification. The system generates two reports; an Initial Feedback Report, which indicates that the submission has passed the initial check of header and trailer information, and the Final Validation Report, which provides a detailed account of any errors found during the validation of the records in the submitted MDS file. Both reports are formatted as text files with column specifications so that they may be easily read, printed, or downloaded.

---

## INITIAL FEEDBACK REPORT

The Initial Feedback Report should be received shortly after submitting the file while you remain online (Figure 3-11).

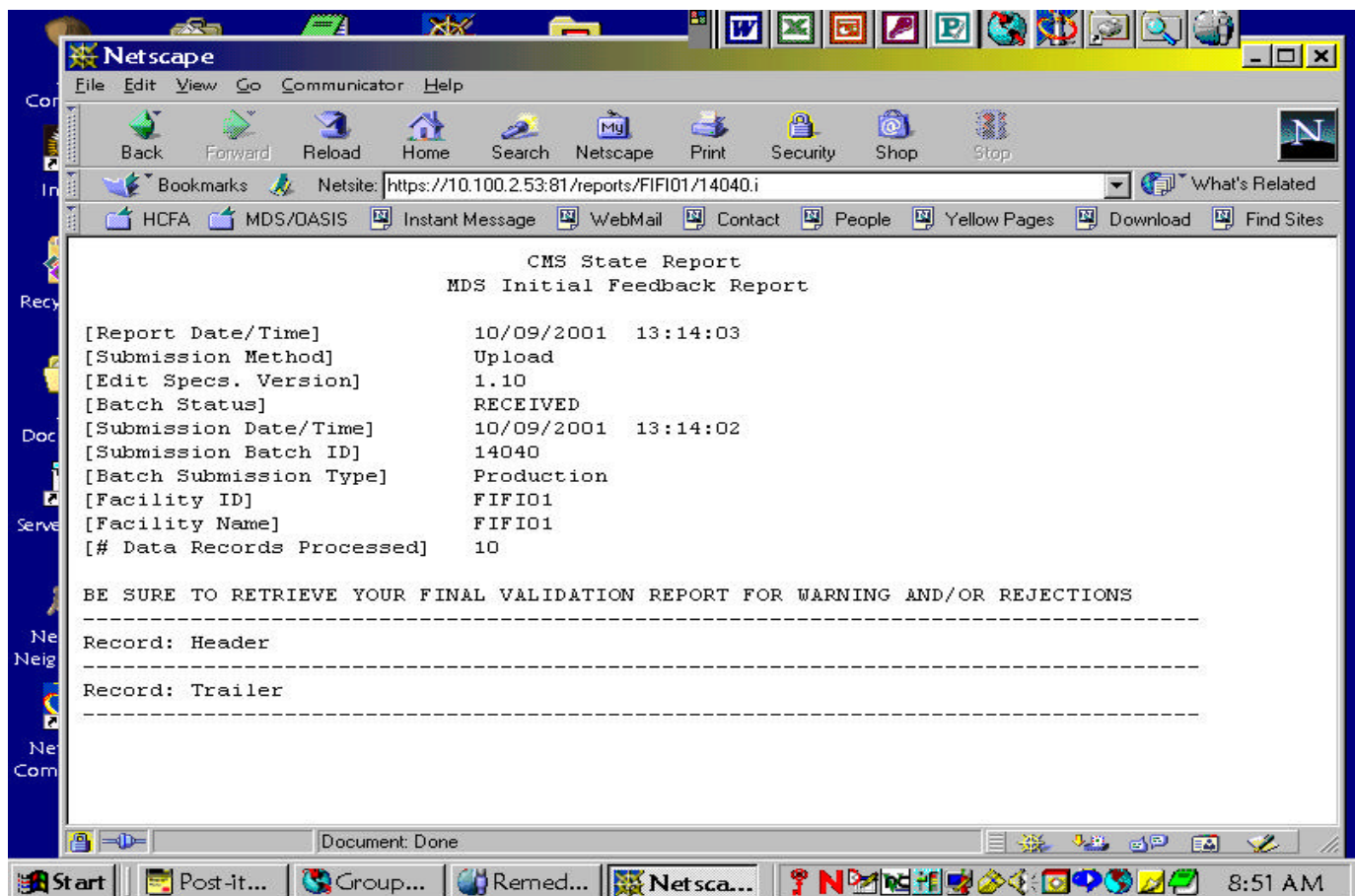


Figure 3-11. Initial Feedback Report

---

⇒ *Contact your MDS encoding software vendor should you need assistance in correcting rejected submissions.*

The time it takes to generate and return the Initial Feedback Report may depend on the file size, modem speed, and system activity; however, you should remain on the MDS File Submission window until you receive the report. The Initial Feedback Report will indicate whether your submission was received or rejected. If it has been rejected, you may need to make corrections to the file pursuant to the error correction policy defined by CMS and resubmit it. Examples of rejection criteria include corrupted file structure or invalid facility identification. In either case, no data will be extracted and your Initial Feedback Report will indicate the rejection error.

Once you have received and reviewed the Initial Feedback Report, you may choose to return to CMS MDS data submission process (i.e., the MDS File Submission screen) or the CMS MDS main menu by pointing and clicking on either of the underlined links.

⇒ *The time stamp uses the 24 hour convention so that 2:09 p.m. will appear as 14:09.*

The top portion of the Initial Validation Report and the Final Validation Report are the same except for the information on the number of records rejected, number of records with errors, and total number of errors. The Initial Feedback Report and Final Validation Report (Figures 3-11 and 3-12) include:

⇒ *You should take note of the Submission Batch Identification (ID) number. This number will assist you in finding the corresponding Final Validation Report. More importantly, the Submission Batch ID will be used in troubleshooting any issues pertaining to that specific submission.*

- The Report Date/Time
- Submission method
- Edit Specs Version
- Batch Status indicates whether the file has been *received* successfully or *rejected* based on the initial validation check. If it is rejected, you should review the file for any errors in the header, such as facility identification information, and resubmit the file.
- The Submission date and time will be in the same format as the report date and time.
- A Submission Batch ID is assigned to the submission
- Batch Submission Type will indicate whether the submission was a production or test submission \*If the batch is rejected, the batch submission type will be "unknown".
- Facility ID is the identification number assigned to your facility
- Facility Name

⇒ *Remember to save and/or print a copy of the Initial Feedback Report.*

## Facility Name

- The number of Records Processed will indicate the number of records per file that have been processed
- The number of Records Rejected, the number of Duplicate Records, the number of 0\_00 Records, the number of Records with messages, and the Total number of messages are not displayed on the Initial Feedback Report. Once the entire file has been validated, these lines and the Report Detail will be completed in the Final Validation Report.

## FINAL VALIDATION REPORT

The Final Validation Report will be generated within 24 hours of submission of the file (Figure 3-12). The report is created after the MDS System performs data validation, timing checks, sequence checks, and calculated element validations. The timing and sequence of the MDS records are verified against customized State schedules.

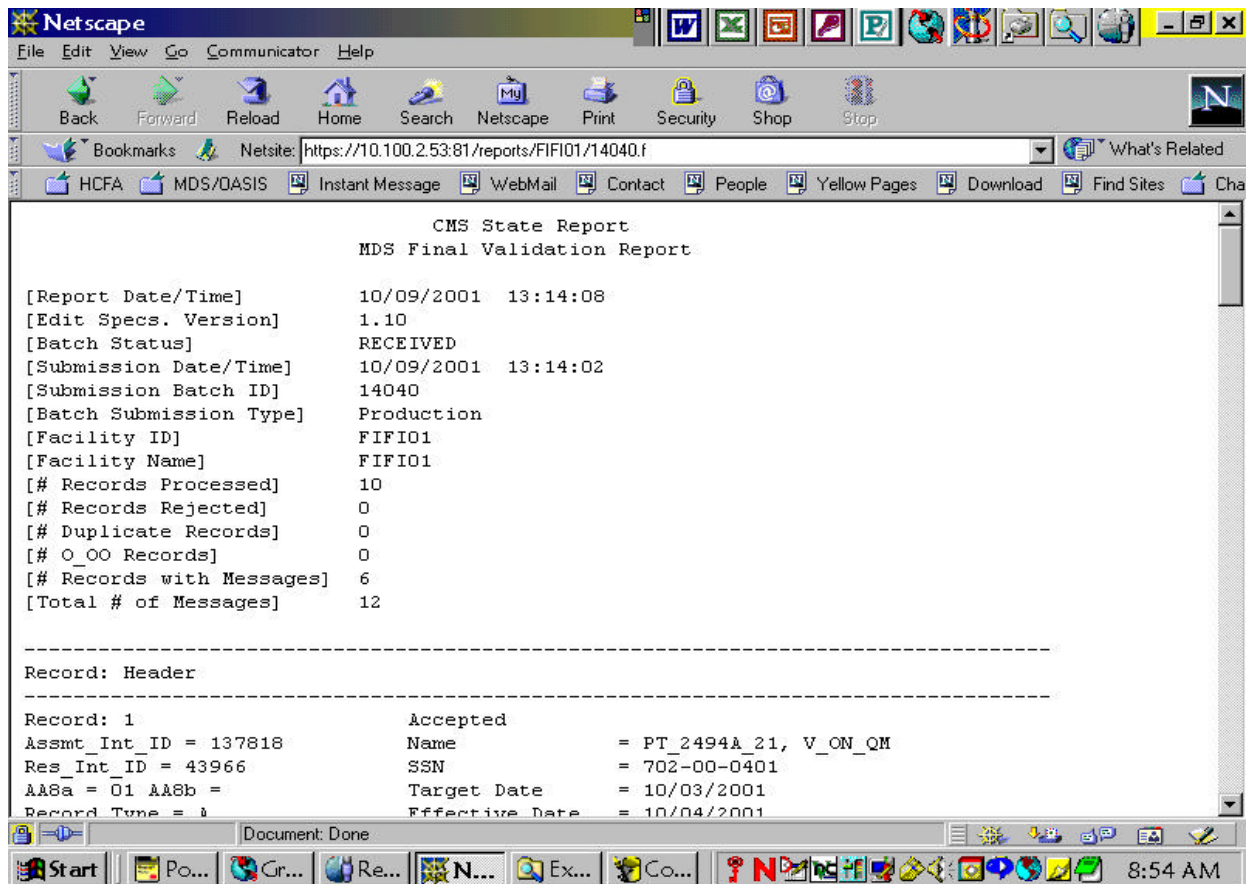


Figure 3-12. Final Validation Report



The actual time it takes to generate the Final Validation Report may depend on the file size and system activity; therefore, it is not necessary for you to remain online to wait for this report. To exit the MDS System, simply exit the browser (select Exit from the File menu or double click on the small box at the top left corner of the window).

The Report Detail section of the Final Validation Report indicates the type and number of errors encountered in the MDS records that were sent. You should be able to access the Final Validation Report within 24 hours for validations that cannot be performed online in the same session. In other words, should you submit a very large file, **you may choose to exit the MDS System after receiving the Initial Feedback Report verifying acceptance of the submission.**

Final Validation Reports are accessed from the CMS MDS Main Menu. Simply select on Receive Validation Reports. If you have initiated a new session, you will access the CMS MDS Welcome Page and select MDS Submissions. The User name and Password Required window will appear for you to complete. If you are continuing an ongoing session and have already completed a user log in, the Validation Report Listing window (Figure 3-13) will appear after you select Receive Validation Reports.

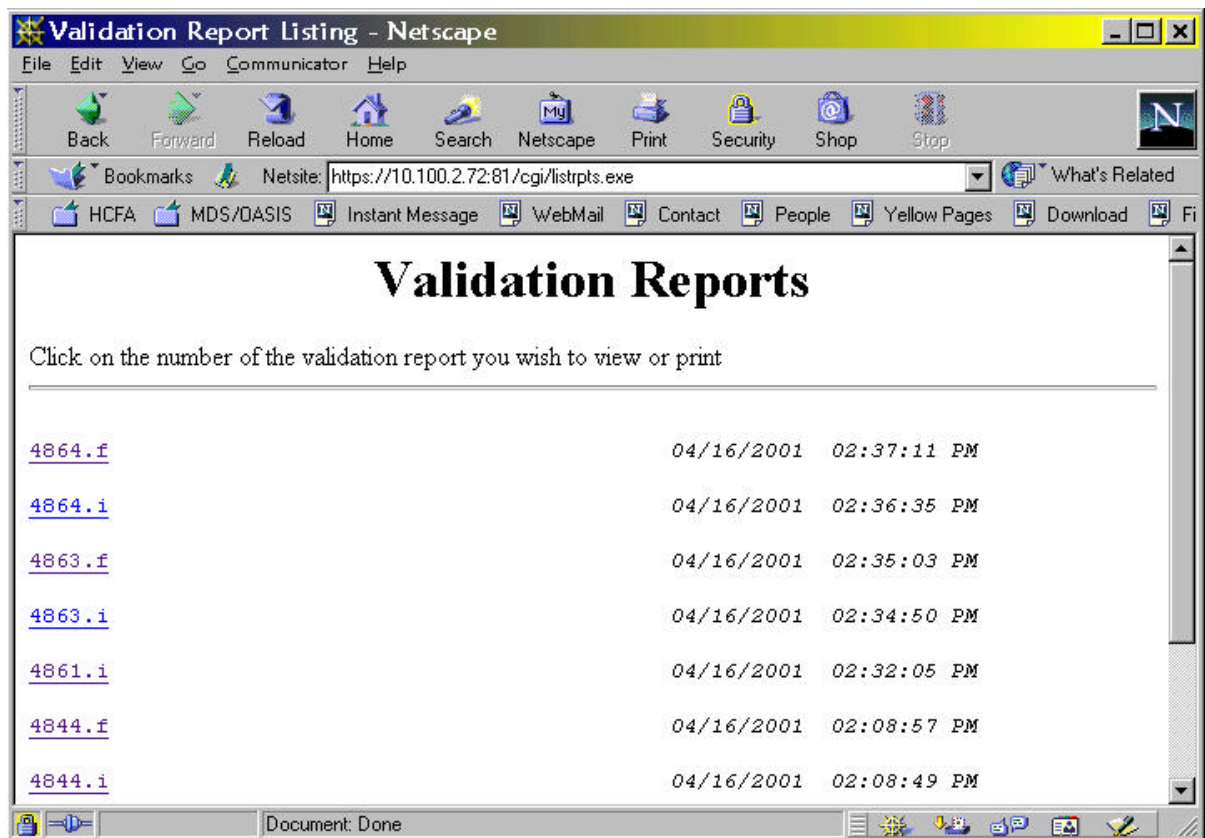


Figure 3-13. Validation Report Listing Window

---

⇒ *It is important to note that the file will be processed and accepted even with errors or exceptions to specifications in the data. See the submission rejection criteria later in this section.*

This window lists Initial Feedback reports, Final Validation reports and other reports produced by the CMS MDS system at the State, beginning with the most recently generated report. The reports are identified by the Submission Batch ID number followed by an “f” for Final Validation reports, and “i” for Initial Feedback reports. In order to access a report, simply point and click on the underlined file name. If you do not wish to view any validation reports, you can point and click on main menu at the bottom of the window to return to the CMS MDS Main Menu.

If you would like to save a report from this screen, point and **click your right mouse button** on a specific underlined report title and then select **Save Link As** from the pop-up menu.

To view a specific Final Validation Report, point and click (your left mouse button) on the underlined report title.

If your computer or the computer designated for MDS submissions is connected to a printer, you can select **Print** from the Browser File menu to print a copy of the Final Validation Report. You may also select **Save As** from the Browser File menu and save the report to a floppy disk or your hard drive. It is recommended that a copy of all validation reports be printed for reference in troubleshooting errors. The MDS System is defaulted to delete validation reports that are over 30 days old.

⇒ *The report titles are based on the Submission Batch ID number not a file name. You should note this information when the Initial Feedback Report is received in order to identify the corresponding Final Validation Report from the listing and for any troubleshooting needs.*

For each data record, the report detail section will include the following information:

- Record number (based on the order in the submission file)
- Record status (accepted or rejected)
- Resident name
- Res\_Int\_ID
- SSN
- AA8a/AA8b
- Target Date
- Record Type
- Effective Date
- AT2
- Attestation Date (AT6)

Below this information will be listed each field in error (e.g., AA8a), the invalid submitted data for that field, the error message number and type, and a description of the error message. If there are any errors in the header record, they will be displayed first in the report. If there are any errors in the trailer record, they will be displayed last in the report. The Validation Report Messages and Description Guide provides information on interpreting the various messages or exceptions in the data fields as they appear in the Initial Feedback Report and Final Validation Report.